



## **PACIFIC ORGANIC & ETHICAL TRADE COMMUNITY (POETCom) MEMBERSHIP POLICY**

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### 1 Introduction

POETCom is a membership organization. POETCom's advocacy capacity is based on having a strong membership base and the resources to publish, communicate and represent the organic community at strategic international meetings and with key influencers and international policy decision-makers.

It is POETCom's objective to serve its affiliates to the greatest extent possible, making effective use of the resources available.

According to its statutes POETCom has 3 categories of affiliates: Focal points, Members, and Supporters.

### 2 Purpose

This policy was established to regulate and define:

- affiliation requirements and services
- affiliate application procedures
- termination of membership

**Table 1: Affiliation Requirements**

| REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP  | Focal Point | Member | Supporter |
|--|-------------|--------|-----------|
| Endorse POETCom's mission & goals and the Principles of Organic Agriculture and ethical trade                          | X           | X      | X         |
| Be permanently based and registered in one or more of the Pacific Islands countries and territories                    | X           | X      |           |
| An organisation or department of an institution  | X           | X      | X         |
| Individual   |             |        | X         |
| Be agreed as representing the organic movement of a Pacific Island Country or Territory by the members in that country | X           |        |           |
| Submit national organic movement annual report to POETCom  | X           |        |           |
| At least three people employed or active in the organisation   | X           | X      |           |
| Predominantly organic*   | X           |        |           |
| Complete annual affiliates survey  | X           | X      |           |

\* Predominantly organic means: More than 50 % of the turnover/budget is related to Organic Agriculture OR More than 50 % of the activities/time investment of an organization is related to Organic Agriculture\*\*.

\*\* Related to Organic Agriculture means: The organization is following the objectives of organic agriculture, (this includes the range of organic activities, certified and not certified, local, regional and global) or the activities are positively related to organic agriculture (for example Rural development, Fair Trade, etc.)

### 3 Change of Status

In case the situation of an affiliated focal point, member or supporter has changed significantly with regard to the requirements, the affiliate may apply for a change in status. The application procedure applies., the affiliate may apply for a change in status. The application procedure applies.

**Table 2: Services for Affiliates**

| SERVICES   | Focal Points | Members | Supporters |
|--|--------------|---------|------------|
| Voting rights at the general assembly and at ballot votes  | X            |         |            |
| Listing in directory   | X            | X       | X          |
| POETCom e –newsletter  | X            | X       | X          |
| Links from POETCom’s website to members homepage   | X            |         |            |
| Listing on POETCom’s website   | X            | X       |            |
| Access to the members only website and services ( free download of training materials, directory, presentations etc) | X            | X       |            |

### 4 Affiliation Application

According to Article 3 of the POETCom Statutes, “The Advisory Board decides upon admission of focal points, members and supporters.”

The Advisory Board approves new affiliates and their level of membership. The Advisory Board may reject applications if it deems the activities of the applicant counter POETCom’s mission or goals.

Activities countering POETCom’s mission or goals include, among others:

- Advocating or supporting the use of genetically modified organisms or intentionally using genetically modified organisms in organic production systems.
- The use of chemicals that threaten the integrity of organic production, processing and packing. This also includes the production of agrochemicals for such use.
- Cruelty to animals
- Violation of human and laborer’s rights
- Using the Organic Pasifika mark without permission (commercially or not)
- Using in media or funding proposals claims to POETCom membership status with does not correspond to the truth or without written authorization.

Those applying to be Focal Point where there is more than one member must explain the selection process at country level. The POETcom Secretariat reserves the right to confirm Focal Point applications with other members in that country.

## 5 Application Procedure

The applicant sends to the POETCom Head Office:

- The completed and signed application form (Annex 1)
- Any supporting documentation about the organization.

The POETCom secretariat office screens the documents, informs the applicant if documents or information are lacking and regularly makes a recommendation to POETCom's Advisory Board. After Advisory Board approval new members and supporters receive a welcome package with a membership certificate (indicating the status and date of membership). The name and country of origin of new members are published in the POETCom e-newsletter following the approval.

## 6 Affiliates Responsibilities

All POETCom affiliates must maintain up to date information for the POETCom directory and website at least through the annual Affiliate survey.

The Affiliate survey is due 31 January of each calendar year. Failure to submit the survey will result in removal from the directory and website until the survey is received.

Focal Points must submit a National Organic Industry Summary report in the format provided by the POETCom Secretariat annually.

The National Organic Industry Summary is due 31 January of each calendar year. Failure to submit the National Organic Industry Summary will result in removal from the directory and website until the survey is received and the Advisory Board may revert to the National organic movement to select a new Focal Point.

The Advisory Board may initiate a General Assembly decision to introduce a fee paying scheme; taking into account the different financial means of its affiliates of different sectors of the organic movement as well as the need to generate income for the POETCom budget.

## 7 Termination of affiliation

Renewal application for affiliation is not required. If the affiliation is not terminated by the affiliate or by POETCom, the affiliation continues. Affiliates may terminate their affiliation at any time. A notice of termination of the affiliation must be sent to the Secretariat in writing. The Advisory Board may terminate affiliates which:

- No longer fulfill the affiliation requirements
- Have misused POETCom's name, logo or seal
- Damaged the image of POETCom, its members or Organic Agriculture in general
- Are engaged in activities, which are generally counter to POETCom's mission, goals and objectives.
- Have not undertaken the responsibilities detailed above.
- Other serious reasons that may be defined by the Advisory Board or the General Assembly

Before the member is removed, a written communication shall be sent out by the POETCom Secretariat, indicating the reason for the problem and inviting comments and explanation of the situation within a 4 weeks deadline.

Annex1: Application form (see separate document)